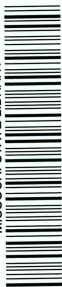


MO  
GA.De  
2:F 49

MISSOURI STATE LIBRARY



0 1907 0053055 2

MISSOURI STATE LIBRARY

DEC 23 1997 5 8 5

DEPOSITORY DOCUMENT

**Final Report**  
**of the**  
**Joint Interim Committee**  
**on School Desegregation and Finance**

**December 15, 1997**

# JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE ON DESEGREGATION AND SCHOOL FINANCE ISSUES

---

Missouri General Assembly - Capitol Building, Jefferson City, MO 65101

## Senators

Ted House, Co-Chair  
William "Lacy" Clay  
Phil Curls  
Franc Flotron  
Sidney Johnson  
David Klarich  
Joe Maxwell  
Morris Westfall  
Anita Yeckel

## Representatives

Steve Stoll, Co-Chair  
Linda Bartelsmeyer  
Mary Bland  
Joe Heckemeyer  
Emmy McClelland  
Steve McLuckie  
Carson Ross  
Charlie Shields  
Charles Quincy Troupe

December 15, 1997

We respectfully submit to you the Final Report of the Joint Interim Committee on School Desegregation and Finance. The Committee was established in July of 1997 and was charged to analyze the state's desegregation efforts in St. Louis and Kansas City, with emphasis on management and governance, phase-out issues including the continuance or reduction of desegregation programs, funding (especially the funding of at-risk students), and transportation. The Committee was asked to provide a report containing recommendations and legislative responses, as appropriate.

The Committee held 5 hearings to take public testimony throughout the state and 3 special workshop sessions. Hearings took place in Cape Girardeau on August 19, Jefferson City on September 11, Springfield on September 23, St. Louis on October 7, and Kansas City on October 21. The Committee heard testimony from 102 persons including school administrators, students, parents, school board members, state administrators, retired teachers, union representatives, business leaders, community activists, legal counsel for both St. Louis and Kansas City plaintiffs, as well as the St. Louis settlement coordinator. The Committee also received written comments from several who did not testify in person and took additional testimony from the St. Louis School Board on November 5 in Jefferson City.

In both St. Louis and Kansas City, the Committee took a half-day tour of schools. In St. Louis, the Committee visited Vashon High School, the Gateway Complex (Gateway Middle and Elementary Schools and Michael's School for the Orthopedically Handicapped), and Columbia Elementary Community Education Center. In Kansas City, the schools visited were Central High School, Rogers Middle School, and Chick Elementary School. The Committee also received useful commentary on urban governance issues from Cleveland Superintendent of School Dick Boyd at its St. Louis post-hearing work session and on research-based school reforms from Johns Hopkins University educational researcher Sam Stringfield in Kansas City.

On September 29, the Committee held a workshop session in Jefferson City devoted to the topic of school finance, reviewing the structure of Missouri's school funding formula and how other states fund at-risk education. John Augenblick, of the Denver school finance consulting firm Augenblick and Meyers, provided helpful comparative information at that session. The Committee held its first working session to discuss recommendations and proposed legislation on November 6. A second session was held on November 25.

At its Cape Girardeau post-hearing work session, the Committee identified several issues it believed were the most important to address within the broad framework of the charge. Those issues, along with one that emerged during the course of the hearings, serve in this report as a framework on which the Committee's findings and recommendations are presented.

The charge to the Committee was broad enough that the Committee could have legitimately explored many other issues; the exclusion of an issue from this report should not be construed to mean that the issue lacks merit. The complexity of the situation should prevent this report from being construed as the final word on the subject.

The signing of the report by a committee member does not indicate that every member agrees with every assertion in the report. Signing the report should be interpreted as agreement in principle with the primary findings and recommendations made by the committee, which serve as a framework for the discussion of the issues in the approaching legislative season. Our report is offered as a bipartisan approach to begin the long process of restoring local control to schools, establishing a more equitable distribution of state education resources, and supporting all schools in their efforts to make a quality education available to every Missouri child.

TO THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE  
OF THE SENATE  
AND THE SPEAKER  
OF THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Your Joint Interim Committee on School Desegregation and Finance begs leave  
to submit the following report:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator Ted House, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Steve Stoll, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator William "Lacy" Clay

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Linda Bartelsmeyer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator Phil Curls

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Mary Bland

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator Francis Flotron

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Joe Heckemeyer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator Sidney Johnson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Emmy McClelland

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator David Klarich

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Steve McLuckie

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator Joe Maxwell

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Carson Ross

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator Morris Westfall

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Charlie Shields

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senator Anita Yeckel

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Charles Quincy Troupe

**FINAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE**  
**ON**  
**DESEGREGATION AND SCHOOL FINANCE.**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Senator Ted House, Chair**  
**Senator William "Lacy" Clay**  
**Senator Phil Curls**  
**Senator Francis Flotron**  
**Senator Sidney Johnson**  
**Senator David Klarich**  
**Senator Joe Maxwell**  
**Senator Morris Westfall**  
**Senator Anita Yeckel**

**Representative Steve Stoll, Chair**  
**Representative Linda Bartelsmeyer**  
**Representative Mary Bland**  
**Representative Joe Heckemeyer**  
**Representative Emmy McClelland**  
**Representative Steve McLuckie**  
**Representative Carson Ross**  
**Representative Charlie Shields**  
**Representative Charles Quincy Troupe**

**STAFF**

**Rebecca DeNeve**  
**Otto Fajen**  
**Shirley Hutinger**  
**Mark Mlynarczyk**  
**Diane Skaggs**

## **Issue: Distribution of desegregation savings**

Missouri has two school districts under federal court orders: Kansas City and St. Louis. About \$3.2 billion has been expended by the state in court-ordered desegregation payments to those cities. In 1994, Missouri expended \$345 million on desegregation payments in the two cases. In the Jenkins case (Kansas City), a substantial amount of the program was spent on facilities designed to integrate by attracting suburban students into the city schools. In the Liddell case (St. Louis), a voluntary interdistrict transfer program was established, through which approximately 13,000 city students attend school in a St. Louis County district. For these students the state pays transportation costs and pays the county district the full cost of education. Also, the state has funded establishment of magnet schools within the city and provides extra funding for low class size in non-integrated schools in the city.

Recently, the possibility of reduced state obligations has surfaced. In Kansas City, a settlement agreement was approved by the court and upheld in the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Under that agreement, state obligations will end on June 30, 1999, after payment of about \$100 million each for FY 98 and FY 99. Negotiations in the St. Louis case have been mediated by Dr. William Danforth for the last 18 months, but little progress has been made to this point. Without settlement, the state can expect an ongoing obligation of about \$160 to \$170 million per year for the St. Louis case.

**It does not appear likely that millions of dollars in desegregation savings will be freed up to provide a windfall for taxpayers.** Currently, about \$80 million of savings is being incorporated into education spending--amounting to about 4% of the foundation formula total.

The Committee believes that any desegregation savings should be applied to public K-12 education in a manner that does not result in a corresponding diminution of general revenue directed to education. Adding desegregation to the revenues for the foundation formula only to replace general revenue would defeat the purpose of the reforms implemented through the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 (SB 380). However, the cost of funding the foundation formula will soon begin to reduce the Outstanding Schools Trust Fund. Even if all the savings from settlement of the desegregation cases is directed to fund the formula, within a few years the state will have to find additional sources of revenue to fully fund education. **Thus, desegregation savings should not be relied upon as a major new source of education funding.**

Desegregation remedies in both Kansas City and St. Louis relied heavily on transportation of students to achieve racial balance, while Missouri's other school districts have seen the percentage of reimbursement of their transportation costs drop over the past four years. The current level of state funding for transportation is 59%. The Committee finds it fitting that some portion of desegregation savings go to fund the transportation categorical aid line (line 11) at a higher percentage than is currently used in order to achieve the statutory funding level of 75%.

Although remedies included reduction of class size and goals of improved test scores, much desegregation funding was used for transportation and infrastructure, likely to the detriment

of true opportunity for quality education. The Committee also finds that some portion of the desegregation savings should be devoted to improving teaching and learning.

The Committee recommends that:

1. The School Money Distribution Formula continue to be fully funded at a proration factor of 1.0.

**This is the priority recommendation of the Committee and is essential to maintaining adequacy and equity for each of Missouri's 525 school districts.**

2. Existing categoricals should be fully funded at their stated percentage levels as set forth in law. Because full funding would require a large amount of additional moneys, it may be necessary to phase in the expenditures over a three- or four-year period. Assessment, although not a current categorical, is listed with the categoricals for convenience.

<i>Categorical</i>	<i>Additional cost</i>
Transportation	\$33 million
Vocational education	\$19 million
Special education	\$67 million
Gifted education	\$ 3.5 million
Remedial reading	\$ 3.5 million
Missouri Assessment Program	<u>\$11 million</u>
Total	\$137 million

3. Priorities for additional categorical funds have been recommended by the Committee and are as follows: Transportation, Vocational education, Special education, Gifted education, Remedial reading, Missouri Assessment Program.

### **Issue: Defining "at-risk" and funding "at-risk" students in desegregation phase-out districts**

Most states use the Free and Reduced Price Lunch guidelines (FRPL), sometimes in conjunction with other factors, to allocate funding for at-risk students. While objections to the use of FRPL guidelines can be raised on several points, their use in directing additional funding under line 14 of the foundation formula has worked fairly well in Missouri. The FRPL guidelines do not directly identify individual at-risk children. FRPL is a "proxy" measure that works to direct additional money to school districts in proportion to their FRPL population. The programs funded by line 14 are selected by districts according to their needs and thus reflect local control, which most districts appreciate.

Other definitions of "at-risk" populations may be possible. Specifically, in urban areas, the Committee found additional factors such as a high mobility rate for students moving from school to school within the district, need for security personnel and devices, and larger populations of non-English speaking students could all be categorized as identifying at-risk populations particularly associated with urban environments.

The Committee believes that at-risk populations in urban areas experience unique and severe problems in attaining student achievement and require more and different resources for their education. Missouri's current at-risk funding generator has a high multiplying factor (20%) in comparison to the at-risk funding formulas of other states, but Missouri is not on the high side of individual per-pupil expenditure. However, the difference in per-pupil spending between Missouri's urban districts and in its outstate districts, while better than in the days prior to the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993, is still troubling.

Justification for the specifics of additional urban education funding was slow in coming. The lack of specifics was especially frustrating to Committee members who already believed that the concentration of poverty and other complicating factors in urban areas were a reality. The Committee was unable to locate any model in the nation for specifically quantifying the cost of educating at-risk students. Districts should be able to quantify these factors. Especially in light of other districts where poverty levels are high, it seems appropriate that additional urban education funding carry an additional burden of justification. The Committee believes that the need to justify continued funding annually will encourage St. Louis and Kansas City to stay focused on the twin goals of meeting their students' needs and controlling costs.

But beyond the existence of at-risk factors, Missouri's two largest school districts share a unique problem directly related to their desegregation status. The concentration of multiple risk factors coupled with the large student population and dependence on desegregation funds complicates their situation. Further complicating it is the perception that desegregation funds were not always wisely spent and the perception that desegregation funds allowed both districts to be less than rigorous in keeping their finances under control. The long-term financial and academic health of both districts depends on their ability to adjust to much less state aid, but some replacement funding will be necessary to foster the settlement of the court cases and prevent the districts from lapsing and once again becoming a state responsibility.

The Committee recommends that:

1. The current categorical reimbursement formula for free and reduced price lunch eligible students (line 14) should not be changed.
2. In recognition of the at-risk factors in the districts affected by desegregation settlements-- concentrations of poverty, security, English as a second language, high mobility rate, need for teacher salary enhancements, high rate of homelessness, special need for early childhood education and Parents as Teachers programs, and counseling on family and social issues--a lump-sum of \$1000 per eligible pupil, based on average daily attendance,



- should be provided to the Kansas City and St. Louis City districts, subject to annual legislative review and appropriations. In the case of the St. Louis school district, students attending city schools would be counted for payment, while those attending county schools under the voluntary public school choice program would not be counted initially.
3. The payment will be contingent upon the maintenance of the districts' current local tax levies.
  4. Payment will be contingent upon final settlement of the case and payment of the final installment of desegregation moneys pursuant to the court cases.

### **Issue: St. Louis**

The disparity of the condition of school buildings in the St. Louis City district is truly shocking. Despite the success of new magnet schools such as Gateway and the struggle against the neighborhood odds of schools such as Columbia Elementary Community Education Center, the physical reality of schools such as Vashon cannot be overlooked. Although desegregation funding for infrastructure was beyond the direct control of the City School Board, it is not clear that the Board made wise choices in the money it had available for neighborhood schools. The Committee finds that the disparity is currently complicating the end of desegregation in three ways:

1. Many of the City schools are unfit and cannot hold the estimated number of returning students, should the voluntary interdistrict transfer program end.
2. Within the City district, intradistrict busing apparently angers more people than interdistrict busing does.
3. The naturally integrated schools receive, on average, significantly less money per pupil than the magnet schools and the non-integrated schools. Since the district promotes the idea that diversity is part of a good education, penalizing schools that represent what is held to be ideal reduces the district's credibility.

The City School Board is not as far along in its self-analysis as it needs to be. While its August 1995 Desegregation Report and Policy Statement is massive, it is short on specifics. That report's list of suggestions for legislative action indicates the School Board does not understand that rigorous self-examination is a necessary prelude to asking for help from the taxpayers of Missouri through the Legislature.

The Voluntary Interdistrict Transfer Program has its share of detractors, but the Committee believes that students benefit from it, both those who are commuting to county schools and those who attend school with the transfer students. The Committee seeks to structure a situation that would allow a transfer program to continue for a period of time long enough for the districts involved to evaluate and plan for its continuance on a much more cost-effective footing, if that is their choice, or for the St. Louis City district to address its capital

needs if the program is discontinued.

The Committee recommends that:

1. A public school transfer program between St. Louis City and all voluntarily participating St. Louis County districts should be established by statute. Implementation should be contingent on settlement of the St. Louis case and the final desegregation payment. The program should be close to revenue-neutral. Current court-ordered tuition payments amount to approximately \$70 million per year versus \$65 million under a revised transfer program. The current transportation subsidy of \$27 million can be reduced to \$18 million, based on the establishment of four regional attendance zones that group contiguous City and County-district areas. A joint committee will review the program in 5 years, and the funding for the program will sunset in ten years subject to review by the Legislature.
2. The revised program will be voluntary for the child and for the receiving districts. First preference will be extended to children in the existing program.
3. Transportation reimbursement will be two-tiered:
  - a. Children may transfer to any school district within their designated zone with transportation substantially subsidized.
  - b. Any child may transfer to a school in any other district within St. Louis County at a considerably reduced subsidy. The suggested form of assistance is a state-income tax exemption for the cost of transportation.
4. The receiving district will receive the formula payment plus FRPL at actual cost of education. Phantom student payments to the City school district will end. To simplify the distribution of formula moneys, a transfer district will be created to serve as the administrative agency for distribution during the ten-year life of the program.
5. At the end of the transportation subsidy period, the \$1000 desegregation district per-pupil payment on St. Louis City transfer students will begin and be allocated to the St. Louis City school district. The payment may be used to assist with the return of the child to the St. Louis City district or to continue the transfer if the student and the St. Louis City and receiving districts concur.
6. Additional reforms should be made in St. Louis Public Schools to:
  - a. Reduce administrative overhead.
  - b. Make procurement and distribution of supplies more efficient.
  - c. Expand and improve early childhood education and day care.
  - d. Equalize expenditures and class sizes in all schools.
  - e. Provide meaningful school choice districtwide.
  - f. Establish a strong and comprehensive core curriculum districtwide.

## **Issue: Kansas City**

Kansas City has identified four key elements that have been helpful in gauging their needs for and in shaping their expectations from the General Assembly:

1. Where they were;
2. Where they are now;
3. Where they plan to go;
4. What they need to get there.

The district identified millions of dollars of cuts to be made to its budget and worked out plans for reconfiguration of its schools, signalling its recognition that some desegregation funding was not efficiently used. The district has also adopted a districtwide curriculum, a key factor in setting high educational expectations and also in dealing with the problem of an extremely high mobility rate. With a districtwide curriculum, children who move from school to school within the district should not face gaps in their instruction. A core curriculum will also lessen the detrimental effect of school transfers resulting from the end of desegregation funding.

Although estimates range from \$30 million to as high as \$65 million, a funding gap in the \$40 million range has been identified as remaining, even after cuts. The General Assembly has been asked to make this money available, and suggestions have been offered for potential sources that do not currently exist in statute:

1. Income/earnings tax for Kansas City or Kansas City area;
2. Sales tax for Kansas City or Kansas City area.

The Committee believes that this funding should be made available in some fashion, and the Committee's suggestion is to work within current revenue sources rather than to create new revenue sources. The Committee believes, however, that retention by the voters of Missouri of Kansas City's \$4.96 school tax levy is essential to the economic and academic survival of the district.

## **Issue: Governance**

Leadership is at the heart of strong districts, strong schools and effective classrooms. A determined principal can make a big difference with a small amount of money. Strong leadership should be encouraged. Ineffective leadership must be improved or removed, not just transferred to become some other school's problem.

In strong districts with good relationships between the superintendent and principals, the kinds of building-level decisions that characterize site-based management happen naturally.

Site-based management is a very powerful tool: it can allow strong leaders to excel, while it quickly spotlights ineffective leadership. Site-based management may seem like a natural

process, but unless principals are given training and unless the site-based management model gives them real authority to match their responsibility, they may fail.

The Committee believes that flexibility with proper accountability will help schools succeed. The Committee does not recommend requiring specific measures but endorses the idea that research-based school reform programs with proven records of success should be fostered.

The Committee finds that the St. Louis City school district has expressed an inability and unwillingness to make the tough choices needed to reduce its administrative overhead and to improve its graduation rate and overall educational quality within the realistic, limited resources available to the Missouri Legislature. The current extraordinary funding of the St. Louis City school district is an artificially created status that cannot be sustained by the taxpayers of Missouri or justified on the grounds of any ideal of equitable school funding for children throughout Missouri. The district can and must meet its responsibilities with less money, not substantially more, as the school board has requested...

The Committee recommends that:

1. On the issue of governance of St. Louis Public Schools:

- a. The existing Board of Directors of St. Louis Public Schools should be dissolved. Current members may serve in an advisory capacity and as ombudsmen to resolve parent and community issues, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.
- b. The Mayor of St. Louis shall appoint a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the St. Louis Public Schools who shall replace the Superintendent. The CEO shall be selected from a list of at least three applicants submitted by the State Board of Education.
- c. The CEO shall select a Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the district, subject to approval by the Mayor.
- d. The CEO's powers and duties shall include:
  - (1) Responsibility for appointing staff, creating an academic accountability plan, taking corrective action in underperforming schools, and seeking relief from state-mandated programs.
  - (2) Authority over charter schools and exploration of alternative forms of governance for the district.
  - (3) Authority to contract with nonprofit corporations to provide for operation of schools.
  - (4) Oversight of facility planning, construction, improvement, repair, maintenance and rehabilitation.
- e. Beginning in April 2003, the St. Louis Public Schools shall be governed by a seven-member Board of Directors elected from subdistricts, each comprised of four wards. The members shall serve staggered four-year terms. Initial members elected in subdistricts 2, 4 and 6 shall serve initial terms of two years.

2. Principal tenure in St. Louis, as provided in section 168.221, RSMo, should be eliminated.
3. Provided that actuarial reports show that the soundness of the St. Louis and Kansas City teacher retirement systems and the Public School Retirement System (PSRS) would not in any way be reduced or impaired, any new teacher in St. Louis or Kansas City will become a member of the PSRS. Any PSRS teacher who transfers to teach in St. Louis City should remain in the PSRS system. If possible, portability should be established to allow for the transfer of creditable service from St. Louis.
4. An incentive to reduce administrative overhead, uniformly applicable throughout state, should be enacted. Legislation should ensure uniform reporting of district administrative costs so that the basis for calculation will be fair.
5. The members of the Committee will continue to seek alternative measures to the current "lapse and attach" method of restructuring school districts which have become academically or financially deficient.

### **Issue: Public charter schools**

Public interest in charter schools is growing, but some questions remain:

1. What does a charter school do to a district's authority and responsibility?
2. Where does final authority lie?
3. Wouldn't site-based management, properly modeled, solve most of the problems charter schools are intended to solve?
4. Why not allow every school freedom from onerous regulations?

Successful public charter school legislation must delineate clearly the lines of authority and must provide the accountability measures necessary to justify going outside existing school governance structures. Legislation must also address issues of start-up funding, capital funding, and conversions of existing schools.

Successful charter schools in other states demonstrate that a coordinated curriculum and a strong vision of what education should be can enable students from all backgrounds to succeed and often on less money than a typical district school.

Charter schools are schools of choice, allowing families and neighborhoods to escape the grip of bad local schools.

#### The Committee recommends that:

1. Charter schools be permitted to operate in any school district. The sponsor or charter-granting entity will vary based on the district's graduation rate. In any district with a graduation rate of 65% or greater, only the local school board will have the authority to grant a charter. In any district with a graduation rate below 65%, the local school board,

- the state board of education, or any public college or university within the district may grant a charter. Within St. Louis, the mayor will also have charter-granting authority.
2. Individuals or organizations may propose to establish charter schools. Within the St. Louis and Kansas City school districts, each public higher education institution must propose to sponsor at least one charter school. The charter-granting authority of public universities and colleges in the Kansas City and St. Louis school districts does not apply to these mandatory sponsorship proposals. In order to provide a mechanism for objective review of the proposals required to be offered by the public higher education institutions, the State Board of Education will serve as the charter-granting entity. Private higher education institutions and nonprofit organizations may sponsor or affiliate with a charter school in those districts.
3. Strong accountability procedures should be included in the legislation to ensure that every charter school meets the achievement commitments specified in its charter and meets state standards.

### **Issue: Public school choice**

The Committee heard two potentially contradictory things about school choice:

1. Attending school in his or her own neighborhood is usually best for a child and for the neighborhood. Many parents seem willing to accept a trade-off between the comfort and convenience of a neighborhood school and the promise of a superlative education offered at a distance. When the neighborhood school no longer seems safe or effective, the ability to choose a better alternative becomes more important. Every district should seek to provide a superlative education in every one of its buildings.
2. A child should be able to choose the school that best suits his or her needs, despite the child's official district of residence or neighborhood school attendance zone. Child custody, mid-year moves, and occasionally medical or afterschool child-care concerns may motivate these decisions in areas where desegregation is not involved.

Without adequate transportation funding, true choice falls apart. Adequate funding may vary according to the circumstances of each child. True choice can be achieved when districts are permitted to plan rationally for a system that balances quality education with cost-effectiveness.

## Issue: Drop-outs

Alternative schools drew wide approval in the Committee's hearings, including alternatives that were private-public partnerships. The lack of specific long-term funding was identified as a barrier to the creation and retention of alternative programs and schools. School districts do currently have the legal flexibility to adopt innovative alternative programs that can improve persistence to graduation.

School visits and from comments from principals, teachers, and superintendents showed that successful programs address a potential drop-out's situation as a whole. Increased family involvement with the school, whether it is contact with teachers, Caring Communities projects, or weekend classes (and not just in academic subjects), helps students persevere. As one witness put it, a long term relationship with an empowered adult is lacking in many children's lives. Schools can foster such relationships.

Vocational education offers one of the best alternatives for students who must make an immediate economic contribution to their families' or their own livelihood. A solid vocational education that does not restrict a student's future choices should be available to all Missourians, but it is especially important in urban areas.

## Issue: School reform

Schools that have failed to meet students' needs and are academically deficient need to make dramatic changes. There are a number of research-based programs which, if properly implemented, can increase student achievement.

### The Committee recommends that:

1. A grant program, administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, that provides incentives for adopting research-driven educational improvements, should be made available statewide. A menu of proven school improvement programs, to include programs suitable for urban, suburban, and rural districts, will be provided from which a district may choose, and a 50% funding match will be required from the district. The grant will run for up to three years. Funding for the second year will be contingent upon district performance in setting up the chosen program, and funding for the third year will be contingent upon second-year performance. The grant program should provide sufficient technical assistance to ensure that small school districts that lack personnel with expertise in applying for grants are not prevented from applying.
2. A baseline assessment from which to measure school improvement should be established in each school district.

## APPENDIX

### Funding Sources for Desegregation Solution

	<u>\$ in millions</u>
Deseg savings already in formula	80.0
FY 1999 payments to Kansas City	100.0
Increased transportation for Kansas City in categoricals	12.0
Estimated FY 2000 payments to St. Louis	170.0
Current VITP students:	
Formula payments	5.9
Prop C, free textbook, Fair Share	9.2
Phantom students in St. Louis:	
Formula payments	16.0
Prop C, free textbook, Fair Share	<u>4.7</u>
	397.8
Other resources are available to achieve a solution, including additional general revenue	

### Uses for Desegregation Solution Funds

Deseg savings already in formula	80.0
Earmark Kansas City deseg savings for formula	75.0
Kansas City solution	32.0
St. Louis solution	41.0
Revised VITP:	
Financing district	65.8
Transportation	18.0
Categoricals (phase-in):	
1. Transportation (includes \$12 M for KC)	33.0
2. Vocational education	19.0
3. Special education	67.0
4. Gifted education	3.5
5. Remedial reading	3.5
6. Assessments (MAP)	<u>11.0</u>
	448.8



**Additional or Dissenting Comments**

**from the**

**Members of the Committee**

December 15, 1997

The Honorable Ted House and  
The Honorable Steve Stoll  
State Capitol  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Senator House and Representative Stoll,

I will be not be signing the joint committee report but this does not mean that I will not work for and vote for a final bill. I do not know whether you will want to include this letter as a minority report or not and I shall leave that to your judgement. I have several serious concerns regarding our committee report.

Regarding the committee's lump sum payment of \$1000.00, I feel that we have no grounds for having arrived at this amount. As I expressed at our meeting, using the City Board's own figures, one can only justify a maximum amount of \$750.00. The mere fact of adding this additional amount is suspect in as much as one of our expert witnesses testified that a 20.0 % uptick was the average needed to educate urban students and the State of Missouri is essentially doing this with the .2 factor on line 14. That testimony is what caused my question to DESE regarding the rationale for a .2 factor. Even though the state Department testified that the .2 really had no basis other than to factor the use of the funds available, the fact remains that this is an equivalent factor that would represent 20.0%, the amount of money that the witness felt was adequate. Even more germane is the fact that the cost of education base mentioned by the witness was not nearly as high as that of the City of St. Louis and Kansas City at the present time.

As I also expressed during our committee meetings, I believe that the committee should recommend funding the categoricals fully at "pre-380" levels. This would give suburban school districts sufficient transportation revenue so that they could participate in a truly voluntary inter-district choice program using their own revenues for transportation. Additionally, this would solve the problems some of the outstate districts are having in affording their disabled transportation costs. It would have the added benefit of helping some of the "hold harmless" districts with their increasing costs of education. For these districts, there is not even a glimmer of help from the state at the present time. They are handed increased costs with every law the legislature passes and these are not viewed as unfunded mandates, just reporting requirements with no thought to the increased need for personnel to fulfill the requirements. They feel more and more threatened as we pass more and more laws. Just exactly where do we get the term "hold harmless" for these districts?

I have some concern regarding the treatment of governance for the City of St. Louis school district. I am absolutely comfortable with giving Mayor Harmon control of the schools, especially in as much as he is willing to attempt the task. However, that confidence extends only

to this mayor because of his very high level of integrity and honor, two qualities he has exhibited throughout his public life. Why is it not possible to place the Mayor as the absolute authority with all of the necessary attendant powers at the head of the St. Louis school district without designing his governance process? He has shown that he can make hard decisions and, if he has the authority to do so, he should be able to design the process he needs to succeed with this task. Additionally, he will have the power of the bully pulpit. I believe it is wrong to take the power away from the people in disbanding their elected Board of Education. Actually this present board seems to be the first board who has actually paid attention to the problems. They are certainly not the board that created and nourished the present situation. I think it would be wise to revisit the concept of dividing the St. Louis schools or creating a totally different structure for governance in the future when we are able to determine what may be needed and this should come through input from the electorate and not solely through a legislative decree.

My most severe reservation about the results of the committee study is our total lack of attention to some means to assure the education of the students. I realize that we talked about the administrative efficiency ratio and this will help to pull administration costs into some more reasonable levels. However, it does not guarantee that the savings will serve to ensure that children will learn. One major problem in education is that it is, unfortunately, the focus of an issue network with often divergent, even conflicting, goals and they are all struggling for control. The most powerless groups in the network are the parents and the children. We have the business community who cannot even agree on their priorities - some want graduates who are literate and can reason and problem solve while others simply ask that our graduates have a work ethic and a sense of responsibility. It is unbelievable that they do not feel that they can seek all of these qualities in one graduate and should make us pull up short to analyze why. Dividing the task in response to the business community can be one reason for a failure in education. Academicians always fault business in wanting only compliant workers. Academicians, on the other hand, appear to have fallen down on the job in their training of teachers. There is no other way to explain the continual requests for staff development money. The teachers' unions have their own agenda as do the other peripheral labor components and sadly, while couched in terms of concerns for children, usually are more self-serving. Generally, I do not believe that the concerns of the classroom teacher are adequately represented.

The average teacher in the classroom is the hero because they struggle daily to do their job which they consider teaching and their only real problem is that someone keeps redefining what teaching actually is.

We discussed a Funding for Results component and the element in the report defining it is fairly good. I believe, however, that this should be at the heart of the state's effort and the grants should be given only to districts where graduation is not being achieved at an 85 to 90.0% after students with special learning problems have been exempted. I have no problem if priority for grants is given to the two major urban areas because those schools contain the bulk of the need. However, there are other districts in the state who bear the same needs. It would also be important to clearly define which disabilities could be exempted from a graduation count. Some

experts are creating definitions that sound like serious mental illnesses for behavior disorders and this, in turn, creates a different set of expectations for learning. If you will read the recent literature from the mental health community, you will see that there is an awareness that behavior modification is a major component of successful treatment for behavior disorder. At the risk of sounding too simplistic, I will say that my mother would have thought teaching me respect and manners was behavior modification and that is essentially correct.

I would also like to see the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education become a major resource for our schools rather than the regulator it has become. Now that we have a statewide assessment tool, it would be far better if the results were simply published. As the public becomes more informed about the performance of their schools as measured against these standards, they will demand more from their local districts who, in turn, could draw on DESE's resources for help. The state assessment process has identified a body of knowledge that it is generally felt all students should possess upon graduation. My experience convinces me that the public will use this fact to good advantage.

The legislature should use the power of the purse as an incentive by increasing funds for school districts who reach for excellence. This can be done in many ways and should be the topic for study in the immediate future. We have received a 43 page report from the Missouri School Boards Association regarding laws that probably should be repealed. We heard testimony from many districts who have been harmed by the changes wrought through Senate Bill 380. I knew the suburban districts were harmed but had no idea as to the scope of the harm across the state. Though the focus was supposed to be equity, there is only one definition in the dictionary that truly fits and that definition is one that is practiced by the courts, not the legislature, and it is meant to compensate for inordinate harm. I believe it is time to look closely at the school foundation formula; acknowledge that punitive behavior on the part of DESE is ineffective and harmful, only compounding the problem; and make every effort to focus our funding on the effective education of children. This is going to require eventually that we deal with the entire issue network that involves itself with education and focus on the classroom to ensure that the body of knowledge that has been identified as wanted by Missourians is truly taught to its children. Furthermore, the legislature should do everything in its power to link parents and teachers in the successful achievement of this task. My thirty years of avocational involvement with public and private schools and a large dose of common sense has given me a clear view of what to do. I do not share the cynical opinion about parents that I have heard expressed so often in recent years and repeated tiresomely during our hearings. Certainly there are societal problems that make parenting difficult. This is all the more reason for schools to incorporate parents into the solution. However well meaning, the rhetoric that reflects taking over the job of parents is creating an impediment to successful resolution of the problem.

I want to thank both of you for the very professional and conscientious manner in which you conducted this interim committee on desegregation. I enjoyed working with you both, as well as the other members of the committee. I hope you do not view this letter as diverging from the committee's purpose. I will work toward a bill that fulfills the requirements to give the court a

tool to resolve the desegregation lawsuit but I believe that Judge Gunn is very aware that a truly adequate education for the students is the straightest and best path to the goal the lawsuit seeks. I am not sure where teaching children became lost in the ensuing years but I am sure that Minnie Liddell resorted to her lawsuit because the education was not equal for all children in the City schools. I believe that it is imperative that school people become able to articulate the factors with which they must deal in order "to reach the child before they can teach the child," as they are so fond of saying. Throughout four months of hearings, no one was able to articulate those factors and I am simply adverse to spending more money when we do not know how it will be spent. I realize my remarks seem to have a shotgun approach and all of my concerns do not have to be addressed in the final bill; but I believe my remarks are pertinent because all of these issues are interrelated

Sincerely,

*Anita Yeckel*

Anita Yeckel